

**St. John's**  
SCHOOL



# **COMPLAINTS & APPEALS PROCEDURE**

**DATE: June 2008**

**Those responsible:**

**Mrs F S Armour - Headteacher**  
**Mr M Butler - Deputy Head**  
**Mrs H Minto - Deputy Head**  
**Mr A Angeli - Deputy Head Designate**

**To be reviewed regularly**

## Independent Schools Council

# **ST JOHN'S SCHOOL COMPLAINTS & APPEALS PROCEDURE**

This policy is available to the parents of pupils and prospective pupils from the School Office or School Website. It applies to the parents of all pupils in the school, including those in the EYFS.

### **Introduction**

The School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure.

### **Stage 1 – Informal Resolution**

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and **informally**.
- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's Form teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a head of department/ the Senior Teacher /the Deputy Head/ the Headteacher.
- Complaints made directly to a head of department/the Deputy Head/the Headteacher will usually be referred to the relevant Form teacher unless the head of department/the Deputy Head/the Headteacher deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- The Form teacher will make a **written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received**. Should the matter not be resolved within seven days or in the event that the Form teacher and the parent **fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2** of this procedure.

### **Stage 2 – Formal Resolution**

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should **put their complaint in writing** to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Headteacher will meet/speak to the parents concerned, normally **within 7 days** of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Head to carry out further investigations.
- The Headteacher will **keep written records** of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

- Once the Headteacher is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing within seven days. The Headteacher will also give reasons for her decision.
- **If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3** of this Procedure.

### **Stage 3 – Panel Hearing for Appeals against the decision made by the Headteacher**

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution) they will be referred to Mrs J Osen.
- **The matter will then be referred to the Appeals Panel for consideration.** The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, **one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the proprietor, Mrs J Osen,** on behalf of the Panel. The complaint will be acknowledged and schedule a hearing to take place **within 14 days.**
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 7 days prior to the hearing.
- **One other person may accompany the parents to the hearing.** This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete **within 7 days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing or electronically by email) to the parents, the Headteacher, the Principals and, where relevant, the person complained about.**

**Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by paragraph 7(k) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.**

A written record of all complaints received by the school, whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing, will be kept for at least 3 years.

The number of complaints in academic year 2008/2009 was zero.

Should parents feel it necessary, they have the right to contact ISI or OFSTED directly.

Contact details: <http://www.isi.net> Tel. 0207 6000100  
<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk> Tel. 08456 014772